



**HARTFORD  
STAGE**

50 Church Street  
Hartford, CT 06103  
P: 860-525-5601  
F: 860-244-0183  
Box Office 860-527-5151  
[www.hartfordstage.org](http://www.hartfordstage.org)

Darko Tresnjak, Artistic Director  
Michael Stotts, Managing Director

February 17, 2017

State of Connecticut  
Appropriations Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,:

I am writing to you today as a long time and dedicated Board Member of the Hartford Stage Company, one of the six CT Flagship Producing Theaters that receives a line item grant from the State Department of Economic and Community Development.

Thank you for recognizing and supporting the valuable impact that these theatres have in our communities. Today I ask you to continue recognizing this impact and sustain the CT Flagship Producing Theatres line item in the FY18 and FY19 biennium budget.

I stand besides my board colleagues from each of the six theaters who are leaders of major businesses and organizations throughout our state. We advocate for the vital *economic* and *community* impact these theatres collectively have on our region. In these somewhat challenging times, an investment in the arts is one that brings a great return, not only in the economic impact documented below, but in the contribution to the fabric of our communities through educating our young people about the power of the written word and of theater, as well as portraying important ideas and values that are so important in all our lives.

The contribution of these theaters represents millions of dollars in taxable payrolls, material purchases, and rentals. Their contribution creates more than 1,700 jobs and reaches 388,000 patrons and 40,000 students annually. Their contribution has garnered national and international accolades which bring prestige to our home. The return on the State's investment is consistently over 400%.

Elimination or reduction of this investment will have a direct and negative measurable impact on our local economy and vitality of life. As businesses and residents make decisions to relocate outside of Connecticut, it is essential that organizations such as Hartford Stage,

sustain the ability to fulfill their missions; please consider retaining their appropriation.

This is a marvelous institution that merits the investment and support of state government. The Board and staff are dedicated to raising private revenues, but the state's recognition of their importance, through an appropriation, provides leverage to help raise those funds and gives us the margin to provide amazing theater and continuation of our education programs.

Thank you very much for considering our request and come to the theater!

Sincerely,

Judith C. Meyers  
Hartford Stage Board Member